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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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FROM : Amembassy JIDDA

DATE: August 31, 1965

SUBJECT: Monthly Review for Saudi Arabia - June-July, 1965

REF COPY NO. 1 SERIES A

POL 2-1 SAUD

As reported in our A-383 of June 29, the Embassy's Joint Weekly Report was terminated in June and has been replaced by a monthly review of events in Saudi Arabia. This airgram transmits the first report in the new series and covers the two months, June and July, 1965. An unusually heavy workload on the Political Section, together with summer leaves, during this period has delayed the preparation of this report until now and has made it necessary to combine in one report the events of these two months. It is anticipated that the monthly review for August will be prepared and despatched to all addressees on the schedule originally indicated.

Comments from the Department and other addressees on both the format and the general usefulness of this report will be appreciated. Those addressees who do not wish to continue receiving this report are kindly requested to notify this post at their earliest convenience.

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Drafted by: BWrampelmeier:mdl 8/31/65

Contents and Classification Approved by: TWSeeveCony No(s) 12 Series A

Clearances:
in draft: PASutherland:ECON
GRThompson:USIS
Lt.Col. J.H.Barrett:AIRA
AECallahan:POL

Name M Springs Date 11/9/

FREEDMAN

U.S.-Saudi relations during these two months remain good. Through dispatch of an Evaluation Team to review various air defense offers to Saudi Arabia, and by the visit of CCMIDEASTFOR Admiral Maurer to Jidda, the U.S. continued to demonstrate its concern for the independence and integrity of Saudi Arabia and its desire to assist Saudi Arabia in achieving its national defense

goals. The Military Construction Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was signed while the Corps-supervised construction and installation of television broadcasting facilities in Jidda and Riyadh were substantially completed by the end of July. Efforts to open an American Cultural Center in Riyadh, however, have been frustrated, at least temporarily.

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I. FOREIGN RELATIONS

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

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III. U.S.-SAUDI RELATIONS

During June and July the Embassy followed with concern the rising tension between Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and the UAR and YAR on the other as the latter's efforts to reach a political solution to the Yemen civil war were frustrated by [redacted]. On July 31, following Nasir's July 22 warning to Saudi Arabia and the reported movement of UAR troops along the Yemen border, the Charge, acting on the Department's instructions, contacted Shaykh Muhammad MAS'OUD, the senior Foreign Ministry official present in Jidda at the time. [redacted] Royalists and so inform [redacted]

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(A)(5)

Other U.S. actions taken during the reporting period to demonstrate continued U.S. sympathy and support for Saudi Arabia included the formation of a Department of Defense Evaluation Team to review various air defense proposals for Saudi Arabia, and a visit by Rear Admiral John H. MAURER, COMIDEASTFOR, to the Kingdom. The Air Defense Evaluation Team, headed by Colonel Charles YEAGER, USAF, arrived in the Kingdom July 27/28 and, after a briefing session with Embassy and USMTM personnel, began discussions with Saudi Ministry of Defense staff on July 31. Admiral Maurer arrived in Jidda July 24 and departed aboard his flagship USS DUXBURY BAY the next day. Accompanied by the Charge d'Affaires, Admiral Maurer called on King Faysal in Taif July 25.

After several months of negotiation, the Military Construction Agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Saudi Ministry of Defense and Aviation was signed effective May 24, although the final exchange of documents was not effected until June 15. On June 27 Minister of Defense and Aviation Prince Sultan authorized the USACE to start immediately on the selection of a site and the preparation of general plans for military installations at Khamis Mushayt and Tabuk. USACE-supervised construction and installation of television broadcasting facilities in Jidda and Riyadh were substantially completed by the end of July. As noted above, Saudi television went on the air July 17.

USIS efforts to open an American Cultural Center in Riyadh, however, have been temporarily frustrated. Groundwork for the project had been carefully laid with Ministry of Education officials, who expressed themselves enthusiastically in its favor to the point of offering a rent-free site. A formal note was sent by the Foreign Ministry to the Embassy on July 5 stating there was no objection to the opening of the Riyadh Center. The same day, however, Deputy Foreign Minister Saqqaf apologetically asked the Charge that the Embassy take no further steps. At the Charge's insistence, Saqqaf agreed to discuss the matter again with the King. the matter remained in suspense as of July 31.

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On general international problems, the Saudi Government continues to be privately sympathetic but publicly non-committal toward U.S. positions in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic. Although some press criticism of the U.S. on these matters has appeared (some of it obviously taken directly from the Beirut or Cairo press), this criticism has usually been mild or oblique and sometimes balanced by favorable articles on the same subjects. Prior to the cancellation of the Algiers Afro-Asian Summit Conference, Embassy officers discussed with senior Saudi Foreign Ministry officials some of the subjects likely to have been raised at the conference and were able to leave with them resumes of the U.S. position on a number of these, including Vietnam, disarmamen and the future of the UN.

For the Charge d'Affaires, a.i.:

Brooks Wrampelmeier

Brooks Wrampelmeier
Second Secretary of Embassy